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## Bulgaria

### Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

### Meat, Poultry and Seafood Import Requirements 2006

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**Report Highlights:**

This reports describes the latest changes in import requirements for U.S. meat, poultry and seafood in the last several months before Bulgaria EU accession, and in the first 3-6 months in the post-accession period. Bulgaria is observing its international commitments under WTO. The Bulgarian Veterinary Service is considering grace periods to traders and processors when implementing new EU regulations.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Sofia [BU1]  
[BU]

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## Summary

In 2006, Bulgaria has changed a number of regulations regarding meat, poultry and seafood imports from third countries, including the U.S., due to harmonization of its legislation with the EU. Bulgarian veterinary authorities are making successful efforts to be transparent about this transition, to observe their international obligations and to provide sufficient grace period of advance notice to traders. Confusion and uncertainty among meat exporters and importers in the fall of 2006 have been fully addressed.

### Import Regulations in pre-accession period

In April 2006, Bulgaria passed two major regulations on border control of products of animal origin: Ordinance 47 from April, 20 2006 on the requirements to the border inspection veterinary posts and the conditions and the order for carrying out border veterinary inspection and control, published in Official Gazette #43 of May 26, 2006; and Ordinance #46 from April, 20 2006 on the general veterinary requirements for imports of raw materials and foodstuffs of animal origin, published in Official Gazette # 43 of May 26, 2006.

The implementation of these regulations was closely related to the establishment and accreditation of eight border facilities which will serve as external EU border points. These regulations made October 1, 2006 the deadline for accepting current third country certificates (including the US-FSIS 9060-5) and products from non-EU approved establishments. No WTO notification was made at that time.

In June/July, the Office of Agricultural Affairs/OAA Sofia, held negotiations with the Bulgarian veterinary service to postpone the implementation of new import requirements until the date of accession, January 1, 2007 as was agreed between the Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture and USDA back in 2001. The Bulgarian Vet Service made the commitment to revise local legislation in order to observe its international obligations.

As a result, three major documents have been revised: the Veterinary Law, and Ordinances #46 and #47. The revisions were published as follows: revised Veterinary Act (Law for overstocks of sugar and agricultural products, art. 8 of closing articles chapter, Official Gazette #88, October 31, 2006); revised Ordinance #46, amended in official Gazette # 80 of October 3, 2006); and Ordinance #47, amended in Official Gazette # 79 of September 29, 2006). The full text in English is available from the OAA Sofia upon request. WTO notification was made in early October.

On November 3, the Bulgarian Veterinary Service sent a letter (GVK4020/November 3, 2006, available from the OAA upon request) signed by the Chief Veterinary Officer which recognized and accepted the above changes. Thus, U.S. exporters of meat, poultry and seafood can continue to use current bilingual certificates until January 1, 2007.

It remains to be seen if U.S. shipments will be accepted after January 1, 2007 if they are accompanied by the same certificates issued not later than December 31, 2006 but arrive after January 1, 2007. No specific deadline for physical entry of these products has been set yet. See below for details.

### Import Regulations in post-accession period

There are several import issues which are of primary interest to U.S. exporters, as follows:

1. What will be the treatment of U.S. origin products of animal origin exported with current export certificates before January 1, 2007 and entering Bulgaria after January 1, 2007 in the first transitional months of 2007;
2. What will be the import regulations for the U.S. products after January 1, 2007;
3. How Bulgarian importers can apply and get access to U.S. origin meat quotas for the EU market.

In the recent letter issued by the Vet Service (GVK4020/November 3, 2006), the Vet Service announces that imports from third countries, including U.S., which do not meet EU requirements will not be allowed entry after January 1, 2007 including shipments exported from the country of origin before January 1, 2007. This statement is based on the fact that currently neither Bulgarian nor EU legislation is clear about the treatment of these products in this transitional period. The OAA Sofia is aware that a technical meeting between Bulgarian veterinary authorities and Brussels is scheduled for November 15, and that a decision should be taken in this respect.

In late October, the Vet Service organized a meeting with local meat importers where several possible options were discussed: 1/ to incinerate these products as not being in conformity with the EU food safety legislation; 2/ to require mandatory heat treatment for sales to the local market; and 3/ to request a grace period for consumption of these products on the local market similar to the practice in the 10 acceding countries in 2004. In any of these scenarios, the Bulgarian Vet Service should guarantee to the EC that these products will not enter the food chain of the common EU market. Currently, all meat processors are requested by the Vet Service to sign declarations about the origin of meat they are going to use after January 1, 2007 in their processed meat products.

The OAA in Sofia is supportive of the meat importers' position that a grace period of 6 months is necessary for these products to be consumed on the local market. According to unofficial information, the Bulgarian Vet Service may request such a grace period during the upcoming technical meeting in Brussels. It is expected that a decision will be taken and known by end-November.

After January 1, 2007, Bulgarian Vet Service will require two major certificates after EU model which are already published on ([http://www.mzgar.government.bg/NacSlujbi/NVMS/GVK/surovini\\_hrani/Sertifikati.htm](http://www.mzgar.government.bg/NacSlujbi/NVMS/GVK/surovini_hrani/Sertifikati.htm)).

All shipments should be accompanied by an unified certificate for all foods of animal origin which is in Bulgarian only (called CVED, see Attachment 1 – the first page of CVED). The second certificate depends on the product and follows the EU model of export certificates, in English only (see as an example, the pork meat certificate, Attachment #2). In addition, the web page provides information about the respective EU regulations covering imports of the respective products.

All imported products should originate from EU approved establishments. The respective lists are also published on the Vet Service web site:

-for the list of establishments per country:

[http://forum.europa.eu.int/irc/sanco/vets/info/data/listes/list\\_all.html](http://forum.europa.eu.int/irc/sanco/vets/info/data/listes/list_all.html)

-for the list of establishments per activity/product:

[http://forum.europa.eu.int/irc/sanco/vets/info/data/listes/list\\_prod.html](http://forum.europa.eu.int/irc/sanco/vets/info/data/listes/list_prod.html)

The CVO letter GVK4020/November 3, 2006 also announces the 8 border control facilities which will serve as external EU border points after January 1, 2007. There is one facility for air cargo (Sofia airport); two sea facilities (Varna-West port and Bourgas port) and the remaining 5 are located on Bulgarian borders with Turkey, Serbia and Macedonia: Bregovo, Gueshevo, Zlatarevo, and Kapitan Andreevo. In October, the EU experts pre-approved these border facilities and currently they are in the process of EU accreditation. All of them should be ready and functioning as of January 1, 2007.

### **Tariff Rate Quotas**

Starting January 1, 2007, Bulgarian meat importers will be eligible to apply for U.S. origin TRQs for the EU market. Currently, the Trade Policy and Marketing Directorate under the Ministry of Agriculture is preparing a major document describing the application and licensing regime for importers under various TRQs from third countries to the EU. This document should be ready by end-November, so that local importers can prepare the application documents for the new regime by January 1, 2007. The Directorate will collect applications, check their eligibility and validity, and send them to Brussels for final decisions.

There are currently two U.S. TRQs:

Annual TRQs for 4,722 MT for pork meat (ex HS# 02031955 and ex HS# 0203 2955, at a duty of 250 Euro/MT, from July 1, 2007 (EU Regulation 1233/2006). The TRQ is split in 4 equal parts of 25% for each period of three months starting July 1. The applications will be received in the period January 1- March 31, 2007. The guarantee paid for the execution of the quota is 20 Euro/100 kilos.

Annual TRQ for 16,665 MT of poultry meat for a range of poultry products from HS#0207 11 10 to HS# 0207 27 80, at duties from 0% (HS# 0207 14 50) to 512 Euro/MT (HS#0207 13 10), opened from July 1, 2007 (EU Regulation #1233/2006). The TRQ is split in 4 equal parts of 25% for each period of three months starting July 1. The applications will be received in the period January 1- March 31, 2007. The guarantee fee paid for the execution of the quota is 50 Euro/100 kilos.

The Office of Agricultural Affairs/Sofia has details about other requirements which importers have to meet to be eligible for these quotas. They are available upon request.

Attachment 1. CVED (in Bulgaria)

РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ		ОБЩ ВЕТЕРИНАРЕН ДОКУМЕНТ ЗА ВЪВЕЖДАНЕ, ОВДВ			
Част I: Дани за представяната пратка	1. Изпращач / Износител	Референтен № на ОВДВ:			
		Граничен инспекционен пункт			
		АНИМО №.			
	3. Получател	4. Лице, отговорно за товара			
	5. Вносител	6. Страна на производ	+ ISO код	7. Страна, от която се напраща пратката	+ ISO код
		8. Адрес за доставка			
	9. Пристигане на ГИВП (очаквана дата)	10. Ветеринарни документи Номер(а) Дата на издаване Предприятие по производ (ако е приложимо) Ветеринарен регистрационен номер			
	11. Име на плавателния съд / № на полета на самолета Корабна товарителница № / Самолетна товарителница № Вагон / превозно средство/ ремарка №				
	12. Вид на продукта, брой и вид опаковки	13. Тарифен код на стоката (СН, минимум първите 4 цифри)			
		14. Бруто тегло (кг.)		15. Нето тегло (кг.)	
Температура	Охладени: <input type="checkbox"/>	Замразени: <input type="checkbox"/>	Стайна температура: <input type="checkbox"/>		
16. Номер на пломбата и номер на контейнера					
17. Преговарена за	<input type="checkbox"/>	18. За транзит до трета страна <input type="checkbox"/>			
ГИВП на ЕС	АНИМО №	До трета страна:	+ ISO код:		
Трета страна	ISO код на третата страна:	Извозач ГИВП:	АНИМО №:		
19. Отговаря на изискванията		20. За повторно внасяне			
Отговаря	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
НЕ отговаря	<input type="checkbox"/>				
21. За вътрешния пазар		22. За пратки, които НЕ отговарят на изискванията за внасяне			
Човешка консумация	<input type="checkbox"/>	Митнически склад	<input type="checkbox"/>	Per. №	
Фуражи за животни	<input type="checkbox"/>	Свободна зона или свободен склад	<input type="checkbox"/>	Per. №	
Фармацевтични цели	<input type="checkbox"/>	Корабен доставчик	<input type="checkbox"/>	Per. №	
Технически цели	<input type="checkbox"/>	Кораб	<input type="checkbox"/>	Име	
Друго предназначение:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Пристанище			
23. Декларация		Място и дата на подписване на декларацията			
Аз, долуподписаното лице, отговорно за описания по-горе товар удостоверявам, че доколкото ми е известно данните, представени от мен в част I на този документ са верни и пълни и съм съгласен да изпълня законните изисквания на Наредба 47 за изискванията към граничните инспекционни ветеринарни пунктове и условията и реда за провеждане на граничен инспекционен ветеринарен контрол, в т. ч. и заплащането на ветеринарните проверки, за връщането на всяка пратка, отвърлена след транзит през България до трета страна (чл. 37, ал1, т.3) или ако е необходимо да заплатя разходите за унищожаването на тази пратка.		Име на подписващия			
		Подпис			

**Attachment #2. Export certificate for pork meat (in English)****COMMISSION DECISION**

of 8 September 2000 laying down animal and public health conditions and veterinary certification for imports of minced meat and meat preparations from third countries and repealing Decision 97/29/EC

*(notified under document number C(2000)2533)*

*(Text with EEA relevance)*

**2000/572/EC**

*(OJ No. L 240, 23.09.2000, p. 19)*

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Directive 94/65/EC of 14 December 1994 laying down the requirements

for the production and placing on the market of minced meat and meat preparations (1), and in particular

Article 13 thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Specific conditions relating to the requirements of Directive 94/65/EC for the importation into

the Community of minced meat and meat preparations must be established in a model of certificate including both the public and the animal health conditions. These conditions may not be less stringent than those laid down in Articles 3 and 5 of that Directive.

(2) Commission Decision 97/29/EC (2) establishes health conditions and public health certification

for the importation of minced meat and meat preparations from third countries.

(3) Animal health conditions have not yet been established.

(4) A new model of certificate must be established laying down both the animal and the public

health conditions for imports of minced meat and meat preparations.

(5) Decision 97/29/EC must be repealed.

(6) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Standing

Veterinary Committee,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

**Article 1**

This Decision lays down the animal and public health conditions and veterinary certification for the importation of minced meat and meat preparations.

**Article 2**

The importation of minced meat is subject to the following conditions:

1. it has been produced in accordance with the requirements laid down in Articles 3 and 7 of Directive 94/65/EC;
2. it comes from an establishment or establishments offering the guarantees provided for in Annex I of Directive 94/65/EC;
3. it has been deep-frozen at the production plant or plants of origin.

**Article 3**

The importation of meat preparations is subject to the following conditions:

- 1. they have been produced in accordance with the requirements laid down in Articles 5 and 7 of Directive 94/65/EC;
- 2. they come from an establishment or establishments offering the guarantees provided for in Annex I of Directive 94/65/EC;
- 3. they have been deep-frozen at the production plant or plants of origin.

**Article 4**

- 1. Each consignment of minced meat shall be accompanied by an original, numbered health certificate, completed, signed and dated, composed of a single sheet and conforming to the model laid down in Annex I.
- 2. Each consignment of meat preparations shall be accompanied by an original, numbered health certificate, completed, signed and dated, composed of a single sheet and conforming to the model laid down in Annex II.
- 3. The certificates shall be drawn up in at least one of the official languages of the Member State of introduction into the Community.

**Article 5**

This Decision shall apply from 1 October 2000.

**Article 6**

- 1. Decision 97/29/EC is repealed on the date referred to in Article 5.
- 2. Member States shall authorise the importation of minced meat and meat preparations, produced and certified according to the requirements of Decision 97/29/EC during the 35 days following the date mentioned in paragraph 1.

**Article 7**

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.  
Done at Brussels, 8 September 2000.

*For the Commission*

*David BYRNE*

*Member of the Commission*

(1) OJ L 368, 31. 12. 1994, p. 10.

(2) OJ L 12, 15. 1. 1997, p. 33.

**ANNEX I**

**ANIMAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH CERTIFICATE FOR MINCED MEAT (1)**

*Note for the importer:* This certificate is only for veterinary purposes and has to accompany the consignment until it reaches the border inspection post.

Coded number (2)

Country of destination: .....

Exporting country (3): .....Code of territory:.....

Ministry: .....

Competent issuing authority: .....

**I. Identification of minced meat**

Lot No Nature of meat (species)(4) Number of individual items or packages:

Storage and transport temperature

Storage life

Net weight

Nature of products (5)

**II. Origin of minced meat**

Address(es)and veterinary approval number(s)of approved manufacturing establishment(s):

.....  
.....

Address(es)and approval number(s)of approved cold store(s)(6):

.....  
.....

Address(es)of place of loading:.....

.....  
.....

Name and address of consignor: .....

.....  
Name and address of consignee:.....

The meat will be sent to:(country and place of destination)

.....  
.....

by the following means of transport (7)

Railway wagon Lorry Aircraft Ship

**IV. Health attestation**

I, the undersigned, certify that I have read and understood Council Directive 94/65/EC and that the minced meat described above:

(a) consists of meat derived from the species referred to in I above that:  
— satisfies the relevant animal health requirements laid down in Commission Decision(s) . . .  
..... (8)

and/or (9)  
— originates in a Member State of the European Community satisfying the requirements of Council Directive 64/433/EEC (10);

(b) was produced in accordance with the requirements laid down in Articles 3 and 7of Directive 94/65/EC;

(c) comes from an establishment or establishments offering the guarantees provided for in Annex I of Directive 94/65/EC;

(d) has been deep-frozen at the production plant or plants of origin.

Done at ....., on .....  
(place) (date)

(Stamp and signature of official veterinarian)(11)

.....  
(Name in capital letters)

(1) Within the meaning of Article 3(1)of Directive 94/65/EC.

(2) Issued by the competent authority.

(3) Name of the country of origin which must be the same as the country of export.

(4) Bovine, pigs, sheep and goats.

(5) Mention any ionizing radiation for medical reasons.

(6) If necessary. . III. Destination of minced meat

(7) For railway wagons or lorries, the registration number should be given, where known. For bulk containers

the number of the container. The number of the seal must be indicated.

(8) Number of the relevant and current Decision(s)for fresh meat of the corresponding susceptible domestic

species must be included. Only meat from the concerned exporting third country can be utilised in the manufacture of the minced meat.

(9) Delete as appropriate.

(10) Only meat of species and categories for which imports from the concerned third country are authorised

by the EC, can be sourced from the Member States for utilisation in the manufacture of the minced meat.

(11) The signature and the seal must be in a different colour to that of the printing.

**ANNEX II**

**ANIMAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH CERTIFICATE FOR MEAT PREPARATIONS (1)**

Note for the importer: This certificate is only for veterinary purposes and has to accompany the consignment

until it reaches the border inspection post.

Coded number (2)

Country of destination: .....

Exporting country (3): ..... Code of territory:.....

Ministry: .....

Competent issuing authority: .....

**I. Identification of meat preparations**

Nature of meat (species)(4) Number of individual items or packages

Bovine and farmed clovenhoofed

game (excluding swine)

Farmed pigs Storage and transport temperature

Storage life

Farmed ovine and caprine Wild swine

Net weight

Wild cloven-hoofed game (excluding swine)

Wild leporidae

Wild game birds Domestic rabbit Nature of products (5)

Farmed poultry and farmed feathered game

**II. Origin of meat preparations**

Address(es)and veterinary approval number(s)of approved manufacturing establishment(s):

.....

Address(es)and approval number(s)of approved cold store(s)(6):

.....

Address(es)of place of loading:.....

Name and address of consignor: .....

**III. Destination of meat preparations**

Name and address of consignee:.....

The meat will be sent to:(country and place of destination)

.....

by the following means of transport (7)

Railway wagon Lorry Aircraft Ship

**IV. Health attestation**

I, the undersigned, certify that I have read and understood Council Directive 94/65/EC and that the meat preparations described above:

(a) consist of meat derived from the species referred to in I above that

— satisfies the relevant animal health requirements laid down in Commission Decision(s) . . . . . (8),

and/or (9)

— originates in a Member State of the European Community satisfying the requirements of (10 )

— in the case of fresh meat from domestic bovine, porcine, sheep and goats, the requirements of Council Directive 64/433/EEC (9),

— in the case of fresh meat from domestic poultry, the requirements of Council Directive

91/494/EEC (9),

— in the case of rabbit meat and farmed game meat, the requirements of Articles 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Council Directive 91/495/EEC (8);

— in the case of wild game meat, the requirements of Articles 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Council Directive 92/45/EEC (9);

(b) were produced in accordance with the requirements laid down in Articles 5 and 7 of Directive 94/65/EC;

(c) come from an establishment or establishments offering the guarantees provided for in Annex I of Directive 94/65/EC;

(d) have been deep-frozen at the production plant or plants of origin.

Done at ....., on .....  
(place) (date)

(Stamp and signature of official veterinarian)(11)

.....  
(Name in capital letters)

(1) Within the meaning of Article 5(1) of Directive 94/65/EC.

(2) Issued by the competent authority.

(3) Name of the country of origin which must be the same as the country of export.

(4) To mark with a 'x' in the empty box as appropriate.

(5) Mention any ionizing radiation for medical reasons.

(6) If necessary.

(7) For railway wagons or lorries, the registration number should be given, where known. For bulk containers

the number of the container. The number of the seal must be indicated.

(8) Number of the relevant and current Decision(s) for fresh meat of the corresponding susceptible species must be included. Only meat from the concerned exporting third country can be utilised in the manufacture

of the meat preparations.

(9) Delete as appropriate.

(10) Only meat of species and categories for which imports from the concerned third country are authorised

by the EC, can be sourced from the Member States for utilisation in the manufacture of the meat preparations.

(11) The signature and the seal must be in a different colour to that of the printing.